Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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R 030947Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2507

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USMISSION GENEVA

CONFIDENTIAL TEL AVIV 5302

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SREF IS UR

SUBJ: COMMITTEE ON JEWISH DROPOUTS

REF: STATE 188625

1. DURING THE ANNUAL JEWISH AGENCY ASSEMBLY IN JERUSALEM JULY 11-16, THE QUESTION OF THE HIGH PERCENTAGE OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION WHO SEEK TO SETTLE ELSEWHERE THAN ISRAEL WAS PROMINENTLY DISCUSSED. REPRESENAIVES OF THE SOVIET IMMIGRANTS ASSOCIATION CRIICIZED ISRAELI GOVERNMENT POLICY, THE JEWISH AGENCY, AND HIAS. THEY DEMANDED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT RESETTLEMENT AID BE REFUSED TO ALL BUT THOSE WISHING TO COME TO ISRAEL.

2. CONSIDERING THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECS OF THE MATTER, SUCH AS THE SENSITIVITY OF THE QUESTION OF REFUSING AID TO SOVIET ESCAPEES FOR WHATEVER REASON, THE DIFFICULTY OF DICTATING POLICY TO THE U.S.-BASED HIAS, AND WISHING TO EXAMINE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONSONS OF RECENT SOVIET POLICY CHANGES REGARDING APPLICANTS FOR EXIT VISAS, AS WELL AS ISRAELI INFORMATION AND ABSORPTION POLICIES TOWARD SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRANTS, PRIME MINISTER RABIN APPOINTED ON JULY 15 AN EIGHT MEMBER CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMITTEE CHARGED WITH STUDYING THESE PROBLEMS AND WITH

DRAFTING RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN 90 DAYS. THIS HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE INCLUDES, BESIDES JEWISH AGENCY CHAIRMAN JOSEPH ALMOGI AND PRIME MINISTERIAL ADVISOR ON EAST EUROPEAN AND SOVIET EMIGRATION NEHEMIA LEVANON, REPRESENTATIVES OF JEWISH AGENCY ABSORPTION DEPARTMENT, THE MINISTRY OF ABSORPTION, HIAS, AND THE SOVIET IMMIGRANT ASSOCIATION.

3. ALMOGI TOLD EMBOFF THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO DENY ASSISTANCE TO JEWS WHO DID NOT CHOOSE TO COME TO ISRAEL. A MORE EFFECTIVE INFORMATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL DRIVE WOULD HAVE TO BE LAUNCHED TO PERSUADE THESE JEWS ARRIVING IN VIENNA REGARDING THEIR OPPORUNITIES IN ISRAEL AND THE RELATIVE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SETTLING ELSEWHERE. ALLUDING TO HE DIFFERENT INTERESTS AND DIVISIONS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE, HE SAID AT HE WAS UNABLE TO PREDICT ANY SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE MIGHT MAKE. JEWISH AGENCY OFFICIALS TOLD EMBASSY HAT THE COMMITTEE'S DELIBERATIONS ARE BEING VERY CLOSELY HELD.

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